

CIA 5.01.3 Journalists
ORGANATIONAL News
Council
CIA 101 Bush, George

Influencing the news

Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, George Bush, told representatives of the National News Council June 24 that no newsman affiliated in any way with an American news organization would be hired for any purpose by that agency. This applied to full-time employees, foreign nationals working for a U.S. news agency, stringers, and free lance writers. Any affiliate falling into these categories has been or would be terminated as a CIA employee, he said.

Furthermore, CIA will not use news reporting or journalism as a "cover" for any of its operatives.

We welcome this assurance after many months of statements from CIA director Bush that he "wouldn't" hire full-time or part-time correspondents and then a Senate Select Committee report that it was still being done. E&P on May 1 demanded CIA cut out the "double-talk."

Now, we will wait and see if it "sticks."

This proclivity of CIA to use journalists and a newsman's "cover" to cloak the work of its agents probably already has had a disastrous effect on the reputation of U.S. news services and their representatives abroad. It is partly responsible, undoubtedly, for the formation of a new propaganda network of official government press agencies just organized at a meeting in New Delhi.

It must be remembered, also, that the 58 developing countries that formed the pool of government press agencies, "to liberate their information and mass media from the colonial legacy," believe that only their own definition of "news" is correct and legitimate.

If this arrangement is adopted, as it probably will be, at a meeting of the heads of state of these third-world nations next month, it will inaugurate an era of rapid deterioration of what was once proudly called "world freedom of information." The authenticity of news from those nations will be greatly suspect. The "news" will be only the official version. Independent newsmen and news agencies will be restricted, and probably denied access to those countries.

The New Delhi proposal is right in line with that being considered at a UNESCO meeting in Costa Rica this week for establishment of a Latin American news agency composed of official government information (or propaganda) agencies.

Most of those nations involved in the New Delhi and the Costa Rica proposals have already suppressed the free press within their borders. Their people will be spoon-fed the official version of the news and their ruling parties, cliques, or juntas, will perpetuate themselves in power because of it.